

# BITS & PIECES

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## Health & Safety Training—2007

By: David L. Dolenaar, Deputy Executive Officer

Planning for the Health & Safety Training event is well underway. Locations have been confirmed geographically to allow employees to attend certain classes within their work areas. Some classes will require travel but ample parking should be available. We are currently in the process of contacting and confirming class instructors. Based on the results of a survey, taken earlier last year, many of the popular classes will be offered again this year. We are anticipating **three new classes** at this year's training.



H&S Training  
Oct. 9-11, 2007

will be providing similar classes to those of last year. Some of these include:

- Gangs
- Laugh Yourself Safe
- Weather Extremes

In addition to these new classes, we

- Accident Investigation
- Hazardous Communication
- Fire Extinguishers
- Healthy at Work
- Injury Illness Prevention Plan
- IT Security
- Slip, Trip, Fall
- Hearing Conservation
- Driver Improvement
- Disaster Preparedness
- Yoga

A complete list of all classes and instructors will appear in the August edition of this newsletter. Please mark your calendars now for **October 9 – 11, 2007** for this year's Health & Safety Training event.

### Inside this issue:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Summer Safety in the Sun | 2 |
| Bad Habits               | 2 |
| Swimming Safety Tips     | 3 |
| Recognizing a Stroke     | 3 |
| Did you know...          | 4 |
| Bites/Stings             | 4 |

## County Life Insurance Portability

Many County employees who retire or terminate from County service do not realize they can elect to convert their employer paid Basic Life Insurance policy OR if they have an employee paid Supplemental Life and AD&D Life Insurance policy.

When Employee Benefits mails out a COBRA notification packet to employees who retired or terminated service,

we always include a memo reminding employees that conversion opportunities exist for their life insurance policies.

You have 30 days after your retirement or termination date to elect the continuation of your life insurance policies. For assistance in making this important decision, the Employee Benefits staff is ready to help you!!

While on a ladder,  
never step back  
to admire your  
work.

~Author Unknown

Dogs have  
Owners,  
Cats have Staff.

~Author Unknown

# Summer Safety in the Sun

Submitted by: *Diane Pearson, Safety Assistant*



Seashells, sandy feet, and salty hair are all pleasant reminders of a day at the beach; but coming home with a sunburn is an unpleasant, painful, and constant reminder of poor planning and too much hot sun. Sunburn is a medical condition, defined as overexposure of the skin to the sun's ultraviolet rays, which can lead to dehydration, fever, second-degree burns, secondary infection, shock, and ultimately, skin cancer. When UV rays penetrate deep into the skin, they cause long-term damage like wrinkles, blotches, sagging and discoloration, and increase the likelihood of future cases of skin cancer. One serious sunburn can raise the risk of skin cancer by as much as fifty percent, even though this cancer could take several years to develop. Once burned, there is no way to reverse the damage of overexposure to the sun, although there are ways to prevent it and lessen the pain.

## How can I avoid sunburn?

- Apply sunscreen with at least a SPF-15 or higher, to all exposed areas of the body.
- Minimize your exposure to the sun between the hours of 10:00AM and 3:00PM, when the sun is strongest.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, even on cloudy days and especially after swimming or perspiring.
- Wear clothing that covers your body and shades your face – like a hat!
- Avoid exposure to UV radiation from sunlamps or tanning parlors.



cause it stimulates the immune system. Aloe Vera gel may be squeezed from the leaves of the plant, or purchased at most health and drug stores.

- Apply cool, but not cold, compresses and/or take baths for 10 to 15 minutes several times a day (baking soda in the water may help relieve the pain).
- Apply a soothing lotion to the skin, but don't use petroleum jelly, ointment or butter; these can make the symptoms worse and do not allow air in to assist the healing.
- An over-the-counter pain medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, for example) may be helpful (but aspirin should not be given to children).

## Ouch! How I can make my sunburn stop hurting?

- Aloe Vera is antibacterial and highly effective for burns be-

Source: American Red Cross

# Bad Habits

By: *David Becker, Safety Officer*

According to Websters' a habit is "...a behavior pattern acquired by frequent repetition or physiologic exposure that shows itself in regularity or increased facility of performance".

Bad habits develop over time. They come from bad practices that, we do not realize the true danger of, but repeat often. By repeating these bad practices over time they become a habit. What are some of the bad habits we are talking about?



1. Using the wrong tool for the job.
2. Throwing tools or materials.

3. Horseplay or practical jokes.

4. Improper lifting.

5. Not locking doors at home or on the job or not locking out dangerous equipment.

6. Refueling that hot lawnmower.

7. Using extension cords for other than temporary use. Have you ever used an extension cord for a rope?

8. Treating hazardous materials casually (This occurs both on and off the job).

9. Not wearing our seat belts at all times when the vehicle is in motion.

10. Removing or bypassing a guard or safety device on a machine.

11. Wearing the wrong shoes for the environment.

12. Not wearing safety equipment when it is required. (Look at the drownings every year in our local lakes and rivers).



Do you have any of the 12 bad habits listed in this article? How do we stop bad habits? Understand the dangers that these 12 bad habits represent. Change the habit by thinking about the danger each time. Over time you can change a bad habit into a good practice. At first the good habits will have to be a conscious thought; eventually the good practice will become a good habit. It is up to you to change your bad habits.

Be Safe!

As soon as you see a mistake and don't fix it, it becomes your mistake.

# Swimming Safety Tips

*Submitted by: Ed Fenton, Liability Claims/Insurance Manager*

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign recommends that parents always supervise children near water and install fencing that completely surrounds all pools, spas, whirlpools and hot tubs. Pool fences should be at least 5 feet high and have self latching gates.



- Some states require newly constructed in ground pools to have fencing on all four sides. To find out the law in your state, go to [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).
- Pool alarms and pool covers can offer an extra layer of protection. However, do not rely on them to keep your kids safe; they should be used in conjunction with fencing and constant supervision.
- Know which of your child's friends and neighbors have pools. Make sure your child will be supervised by an adult while visiting.
- Children should learn to swim.

Enroll them in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors when they are ready, usually after age 4. If you do not know how to swim, enroll with your kids!

- Do not let children dive into water unless the child has learned proper diving techniques, and an adult is present and the depth of the water is greater than 9 feet.
- Install multiple drains in all pools, spas, whirlpools and hot tubs. This minimizes the suction in any one drain, reducing risk of death or injury.
- Regularly check to make sure drain covers are secure and have no cracks. Replace flat drain covers with dome-shaped ones.
- Know where the manual cut-off switch for the pump is in case of emergency. Consider installing an improved "safety vacuum release system" (SVRS), a tool that

quickly and automatically turns off the pump (and stops the suction) when something is trapped in or blocks the drain.

- Teach children never to go near a pool drain with or without a cover, and to pin up long hair when in water.
- Adults and kids over age 13 should learn infant and child CPR.
- Pay attention to open water. Be aware of undercurrents and changing waves and undertows when at the ocean or a lake.
- Children with marginal mobility should not be left unattended in a tub or other body of water regardless of age or presumed ability.
- Empty all buckets, containers and wading pools immediately after use. Store them upside-down and out of children's reach.

# Recognizing a Stroke

*Submitted by: Peggy Huntsinger, Disability Manager*



A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

## RECOGNIZING A STROKE

- Sudden numbness or weakness, especially on one side of the body;
- Confusion or trouble speaking or understanding speech;

- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes;
- Difficulty with walking, dizziness or loss of balance, coordination;
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions. Remember the "3" steps STaR.

- S** \* Ask the individual to **SMILE**.
- T** \* Ask the person to **TALK to SPEAK a SIMPLE SENTENCE** (Coherently) (i.e.... It is sunny out today)
- R** \* Ask him or her to **RAISE BOTH ARMS**.

If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call 911 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

\*NOTE: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick ' out their tongue. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

For more information go to:  
[www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org)

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[http://www.co.stanislaus.ca.us/  
riskmgt/index.htm](http://www.co.stanislaus.ca.us/riskmgt/index.htm)



*Did you know.....*

**Patriotic Places**

- There are Thirty places nationwide with "liberty" in their name. The most populous one is Liberty, Missouri (population 26,232). Iowa has more of these places than any other state: four (Libertyville, New Liberty, North Liberty and West Liberty).
- Eleven places have "independence" in their name. The most populous of these is Independence, Missouri, with 113,288 residents.
- Five places adopted the name "freedom." Freedom, California, with 6,000 residents, has the largest population among these.
- There is one place named "patriot" — Patriot, Indiana, with a population of 202.
- And what could be more fitting than spending the day in a place called "America"? There are five such places in the country, with the most populous being American Fork, Utah, with 21,941 residents.



# Safety Corner



## Bites/Stings

*By: Kevin Watson, Safety Analyst/Trainer*

Before assisting in any emergency, please remember to follow the basic rules of:

**Assess** – the scene. If safe, approach and then **Assess** the victim

**Alert** – call or have someone call 9-1-1

**Attend** – to the injured to the best of your abilities with the resources available to you at the time

Bites and Stings can be, to some extent, put into the "high risk lifestyle" category. For example, if you are someone who doesn't ever leave the valley and / or venture into the ocean, you have no reason to be concerned with marine life bites and stings. If on the other hand you have a higher risk lifestyle and go into the ocean, knowing how to deal with marine life bites and stings becomes very important.

Bites or stings from bees, scorpions, snakes, spiders and the like have become much more common in our area. Rattlesnakes used to be only found up in the hills, unless adverse

weather made them seek shelter in other places – like in the valley. Nowadays, with all the building going on in the foothills and mountain communities, rattlesnakes are becoming more common on the valley floor. We also find scorpions and black widow spiders around here. There is some argument as whether or not brown recluse spiders are in our area. I would rather be safe than sorry, so I *assume* they are here. Bees of course are plentiful in the valley due to the agriculture industry. We import them for pollination.

With any of the above mentioned bites or stings, Anaphylaxis is always a concern! If you are highly allergic to any of the above, or any chemical for that matter, please do yourself and others a favor, let people close to you know you are allergic and where your epinephrine auto injector pen is located.

Treatment for bites and stings varies by the critter doing the biting or stinging. Generally speaking, the following is true:

- Venomous snake bites – apply a compression type wrap and transport the victim to a hospital.
- Bees – remove the stinger using a scraping motion with the edge of a credit card, knife blade etc...monitor for anaphylactic shock.
- Dog or human bites – clean the area thoroughly with soap and water, apply anti-biotic ointment, a clean dressing and monitor for signs of infection.
- Marine life stings – remove the barb or stinger, clean the area with warm to hot water and apply hot packs, monitor for signs of infection, seek medical attention if necessary.

For anyone who is not comfortable with their level of technical expertise and would like to learn more about the current CPR / AED / First Aid instruction, please contact the CEO-Risk Management Division, Safety Unit at 525-5781 to sign-up for a class.